Plan your visit to North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany: find out where to go and what to do in North Rhine-Westphalia with Rough Guides. Read about itineraries, activities, places to stay and travel essentials and get inspiration from the blog in the best guide to North Rhine-Westphalia. With its population of around eighteen million actually exceeding that of the neighbouring Netherlands, North Rhine-Westphalia (Nordrhein-Westfalen) is by far Germany’s most populous Land, though it’s by no means the biggest geographically. As the name suggests, it’s an artificial construction, cobbled together by the occupying British after World War II from the Prussian provinces of the Rhineland and Westphalia. North Rhine-Westphalia, Land (state) of western Germany. It is bordered by the states of Lower Saxony to the north and northeast, Hessen to the east, and Rhineland-Palatinate to the south and by the countries of Belgium to the southwest and the Netherlands to the west. The state of North. A large passenger boat passing Cologne Cathedral on the Rhine River, in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. © Westend61/Getty Images. North Rhine-Westphalia. North Rhine-Westphalia. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. North Rhine-Westphalia includes the upland regions of North Eifel in the southern part of the state and the mountains of the Sauerland in the southeast. Volcanic rock occurs in the region of the Siebengebirge (Seven Hills) on the eastern bank of the Rhine River. North Rhine-Westphalia, in the far west of Germany, is the state with the highest population and the greatest contribution (21%) to the domestic economy, even though the coal and steel industries are now history. An especially impressive testament from the heyday of industry in this region is the Zollverein Industrial Mine Complex in Essen, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Watch video 01:31. Travel tips for North Rhine-Westphalia. Rhine metropolis Cologne. Most of the residents do not live in the state capital of Dusseldorf but in Cologne.